

# MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT



## *Office of Public Information*

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### **2008 ANNUAL REPORT OF STATE JUDICIARY RELEASED TODAY**

#### **State courts at all levels see high clearance rates, report finds**

LANSING, MI, May 8, 2009 – Continuing a four-year trend, in 2008 the [Michigan Supreme Court](#) cleared more cases than it received, according to the Court's [annual report](#) released today.

[Chief Justice Marilyn Kelly](#) said that the report, which includes statistics for court filings and dispositions statewide, "should be required reading for anyone who wants to know more about the work of our state courts and the issues facing the Michigan judicial branch. It is a tremendous resource."

The Supreme Court received 2,402 case filings last year and disposed of 2,422, for a clearance rate of 101 percent, the annual report states. Since 2005, the Court has had a clearance rate of 100 percent or more each year.

[The Michigan Court of Appeals](#), with 6,936 new filings, had 7,232 case dispositions for a clearance rate of 104 percent. State circuit courts had a 101 percent clearance rate, as did district courts. Probate courts, which can maintain oversight of some cases for years, had a clearance rate of 98 percent.

#### Other findings in the report:

- Of the 327,573 cases filed in circuit court, 64.3 percent were domestic matters, including divorces and other family court proceedings.
- Only a small percentage of cases were resolved by trial. In circuit court, less than 2 percent of civil cases and 3.5 percent of criminal felony cases went to a trial verdict. Most criminal cases in circuit court – 83.2 percent – were resolved by a guilty plea. Most circuit court civil cases were settled before trial, dismissed by a judge, or dropped by the party bringing the lawsuit.
- Filings of capital felony cases fell by 11.6 percent from 2007 to 2008.
- Personal protection petitions continued to decrease, with 16.8 percent fewer filings in 2008 than in 2004.
- Juvenile delinquency case filings continued a downward trend, with 13 percent fewer filings in 2008 than in 2004.
- In 2008, Michigan district courts saw over 3.6 million new filings, including parking tickets, civil infractions, misdemeanor crimes, small claims, and civil cases where the amount at stake is \$25,000 or less.

Charts showing caseload trends and maps of court districts are featured in the report, as are discussions of each court's function. Statistics break down many case filings and dispositions by type.

Additional, detailed statistical supplements are available at <http://www.courts.michigan.gov/scao/resources/publications/reports/summaries.htm#statsupp>.

The report also includes highlights of judicial branch activities, such as child support collection; the report notes that Michigan ranked sixth nationally in child support distribution – and third in collecting past-due child support – in Fiscal Year 2007.

Other featured initiatives include judicial branch technology, court collections, oversight of children in foster care, budget issues, and public education projects.

The report is on the [“One Court of Justice” web site](http://www.courts.michigan.gov/scao/resources/publications/statistics/2008/2008execsum.pdf) at <http://www.courts.michigan.gov/scao/resources/publications/statistics/2008/2008execsum.pdf>.

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